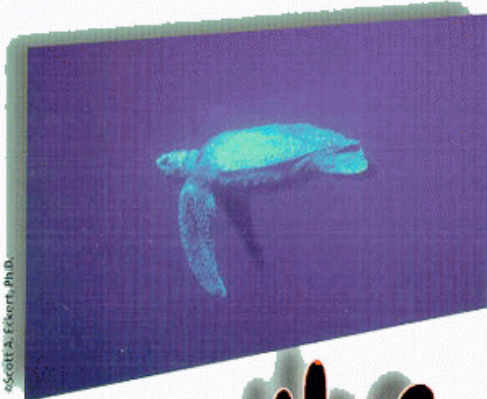


Handling/ Release Guidelines

PELAGIC LONGLINE GEAR



Turtles

Guidelines for all turtles, regardless of size:

- Scan main line as far ahead as possible in order to sight turtle in advance. This reduces the possibility of the turtle being jerked out of the water.
- Do not get ahead of the main line while picking up gear to reduce the chance of fouling or running over gear and turtle.
- Upon sighting the turtle:
 - ◆ slow vessel and main line reel speed
 - ◆ adjust direction of the vessel to move toward turtle
 - ◆ minimize the tension on the main line and leader line with the turtle
- Holding the snap-clip of the leader containing the turtle, continue to move toward the turtle at a slow speed. **STOP VESSEL and PUT IN NEUTRAL** once turtle is brought alongside.
- Retrieve leader with turtle slowly, keeping a gentle, consistent tension on the line. Avoid tugging or yanking line quickly. **DO NOT USE GAFFS OR SHARP OBJECTS** to retrieve the turtle.
- Ensure that enough slack or play is left in the line to keep turtle near the vessel yet in the water until it can be determined whether or not it is possible to release turtle in the water, or safely bring the animal on board.
- If vessel is equipped with "cut-out doors," use this cut-out area to bring turtles aboard to minimize the distance from the water.

For turtles too large to safely bring on board:

- If entangled (alive) and not hooked - use clippers to cut the line. **DO NOT** leave line attached.
- If hooked externally - remove the hook without lifting turtle clear of the water. If this is not possible, cut the line at the eye of the hook (or as close as possible).
- If hooked internally or in the mouth - cut the leader as close to the eye of the hook as possible and leave hook in place to minimize damage.

For small turtles:

- Bring turtle on board by grabbing both the shell and flippers, or by using a suitable dip net or other lifting device.

**DO NOT USE LEADER LINE GAFF, OR
OTHER SHARP OBJECTS.**



To release turtle (1) **STOP VESSEL** and place in neutral; (2) Ease turtle gently into the water, head first, through cut-out door if so equipped; and (3) Observe that turtle is safely away from the vessel before engaging the propeller and continuing operations.

